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C O N F I D E N T I A L DHAKA 001668

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PASS TO: DOD/OSD/USD(P)/ISA/NESA

E.O. 12958: DECL: 10/15/2022

TAGS: [PREL](#) [PTER](#) [BG](#) [AF](#) [XD](#)

SUBJECT: KIDNAPPED BANGLADESHI NGO WORKER IN AFGHANISTAN

Classified By: CDA a.i. Geeta Pasi for reasons 1.4 (b) and (d)

[¶1.](#) (SBU) Summary: The Government of Bangladesh is working with Afghan authorities on the case of Nurul Islam, a Bangladeshi NGO worker who was abducted in Afghanistan on September 15. The Government of Bangladesh announced October 11 that arrests related to the case had been made in Afghanistan. Working-level GOB contacts tell us USG assistance is desired, but no details or specific requests have been provided. End Summary.

[¶2.](#) (C) EMBOFF October 8 raised the status of Nurul Islam with the Embassy,s working-level counterpart at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MFA). Islam, an employee of the Bangladesh-based non-governmental organization BRAC, was kidnapped September 15 in Afghanistan, where he has been working for BRAC. According to the MFA, Bangladesh Chief Advisor Fakhruddin Ahmed discussed the case with President of Afghanistan Hamid Karzai on the margins of recent UNGA meetings, and the MFA was working with the Embassy of Afghanistan in Dhaka. On October 11, an MFA press release indicated that efforts continue to secure the release of Nurul Islam and that four arrests related to the case had been made in Afghanistan.

[¶3.](#) (C) Foreign Advisor Iftexhar Ahmed Chowdhury initially raised the case of Nurul Islam with Deputy Assistant Secretary Gastright during a meeting on September 19. During

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a broader discussion, Chowdhury described Bangladesh,s various contributions to international peace and stability, including details about Bangladeshi contributions to UN peace-keeping efforts in Africa and the fact that BRAC has been working in Afghanistan since 2002. Chowdhury noted that one of BRAC,s employees (Nurul Islam) had been kidnapped in Afghanistan's Logar province and that the GOB was working to secure the release of the employee. Following this meeting, the Bangladeshi press reported that Foreign Advisor Chowdhury had requested USG assistance in securing the release of Nurul Islam.

[¶4.](#) (C) When a Ministry of Foreign Affairs official was queried about the case and Bangladesh,s request for assistance from the United States, the official indicated USG assistance was still welcome, but offered no additional details on what sort of assistance was desired.

Pasi